

Corazon is Shot in the End: Corazon Week 2018

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Corazon is Shot in the End: Corazon Week 2018

by [Pensola](#)

Summary

Five universe alterations where Donquixote Doflamingo shoots and kills his brother Rosinante "Corazon", and one where he didn't.

And in the end, it doesn't matter.

Notes

I am very late to contribute to Corazon Week, but since I recently briefly rekindled my love for One Piece, in particular my fascination with the Donquixote brothers, I wanted to try to join and see if I managed to make something out of it. My idea of universe alterations where things remain the same is inspired by @Remember-the-Petrichor (TA141)'s ongoing fanfic "astra inclinant".

My English is not very good and it has been ages since I last wrote fan fiction, but I will do my best.

(Universe alterations, compared to alternative universe, refers to a story in the same world as canon, but with a few alterations done to make the story take a different direction than canon.)

Day 1: Fury / Pity

Doflamingo, since he was old enough to understand the concept of existence, had a habit of being blinded by fits of fury.

It used to be simple tantrums, his parents believed, and a childish possessiveness for everything he perceived as his. His milk, his food, his toys, his nursemaids, his slaves, his clothes, his right to do anything he wanted, and his family. Or, family as in his mother and later brother; poor Donquixote Homing got endlessly teased by his family for barely being tolerated by his firstborn son.

These fits got worse over time, but were manageable. When he eventually calmed down regarding Homing's decision to disregard their nobility, the adults thought he might finally be growing up.

But as it turned out, the fury of the commoners would take over.

And here they were, two years later. Mrs. Donquixote dead and the three male members weak, poor and in a horrible condition after the lynching not too long ago. Rosinante cried into his father's chest, scared by the sight of his older brother pointing a gun at them.

"This is all your fault, Father!" Doflamingo yelled, though his hands were somewhat shaking. "If it was not for you, I would still be a noble, Mother would be alive and we would not be in this pitiful state!"

"Big Brother, please stop!" Rosinante yelled between his sobs, his hair and tears covering most of his vision.

"Shut up, Rosi, it is all this man's fault that we live like this!" A click was heard. "There's no taking what you've done! I'll return to the Holy Land with your head!"

Rosinante disagreed, but he was just a child and he was scared, with no proper understanding of what was happening.

"Doflamingo, Rosinante..." their father said weakly, defeated. He turned to look at his older son, and gave a pitiful smile. "I am sorry you had to have a father like me."

Carefully, Rosinante felt his hair be lifted, and he saw his father lean in to kiss his forehead. Then, he was pushed away. At first he did not understand, but then he saw that Doffy was keeping the gun pointed at his father. And realized what was going to happen.

And then something snapped.

"No!"

Rosinante ran over to his older brother, and grabbed his hands to turn the gun away. The action accidentally caused the bundle of hands to hit Doffy's face, and his sunglasses were knocked out.

The two brothers looked into each other's eyes, filled with hateful and regretful fury.

"Let GO, Rosi!" Doffy yelled, and being the older brother, he quickly got control of his arms back despite Rosinante's best efforts at holding on and turning them around. Homing had turned around and realized what was going on, and tried to stand up to quickly separate the two children before-

BANG!

After the shot was fired, everything was dead silent for a second. For them all, however, it felt like an eternity before Rosinante's body hit the mossy wooden floor, his shirt quickly being sullied by fresh blood. from his chest.

Duffy never let go of his gun, but his entire body was frozen as Homing screamed and practically fell to his young son's side, holding him and trying to see if he was awake, if the bullet had gone clean through, and said soothing words in panic to him.

"It will be all right, son, don't worry, you can survive this, listen to my voice, look at me, son, please, please, you can do this, please don't leave us, Rosi-"

Rosinante tried to breathe, but it was hard and painful, and the noise around him did not help. Soon his father's voice disappeared, and though he could not move his tiny body, he looked around with his eyes. First on the hole-filled roof, then to his father, then back to the roof, and finally he found his brother, still frozen where he was when the shot was fired, his eyes wide.

Their eyes locked, and Rosinante tried to say something, but nothing came out.

Then he was gone, his glassy eyes still fixated on Doffy's.

When the future Executives saw Doffy, they had a big deal about his lack of sunglasses, saying words like how his noble spirit should not be seen by any peasants through his eyes, and quickly found a new pair for him. Vergo was the one who first pointed out the head of Donquixote Homing hanging by his hair, but nobody made any comment on wide open the man's dead eyes were, nor the hint of foam from his open mouth. As if he died utterly terrified. They instead fussed about how filthy the young master's hands were, covered with dirt both on his skin and under his fingernails, and with quite many fresh cuts.

Some time later, the Marine arrived to discipline the villagers who had been reported for barbaric actions towards fellow human beings, and tired of the endless, screaming debates on what constitutes humanity, barbarism and justice, Sengoku walked to where the victims had last been seen. He immediately noticed the signs of conqueror's haki, with the trees in the area being pushed down and away, and what looked like the wreckage of a cabin being, well, a wreckage. Sengoku had smelled the stank of a dead body and was expecting the worst, but could still not stop himself from being shocked at the sight.

There was only one body there: A headless, male adult with multiple shots all over his body. Not to mention, Sengoku could feel haki in the air, the leftovers of a conqueror's haki. He briefly wondered what sorts of enemy with such powers would bother with a gun, before his subordinates called for him.

As he approached them, he saw them looking at a simple, crummy grave, not too far from the cabin.

"It is fairly new, sir." The soldier looked uneasy before he spoke again. "Should we... dig it up?"

Despite the discomfort at the thought, Sengoku could not help but think about the children reported to be with the adult male, and gave them the orders. As he had feared, the grave contained one of the children, and while Sengoku ordered the others to search the area for the other son, he could not help but take a long look at the little boy's body. He realized he was relieved to see the corpse had not suffered the same decapitation as his father had, nor the amounts of painful bullets.

The Donquixote boy was shot dead.

Day 2: Savior

Chapter Summary

Instead of Sengoku the Buddha, Rosinante was found by missionaries. Raised by the church, Rosinante prays for salvation for his family.

Chapter Notes

Religion in One Piece is confusing, so I go with there being multiple religions and Rosinante being found by the fantasy-Christian one.

I am in general not good with religion talks and such, so while I wanted to have scenes where Rosi and Law talk about faith and purpose and that stuff, I did not have time nor the competence to really go deep into it. So most of it is skipped.

EDIT: FFS, I reread this chapter again after a night's sleep, and some of my mistakes and typos are hilariously bad. Tried to correct as many as I could see. "Corazon, formerly Donquixote Doflamingo" my butt; I just got used to writing those two names together that I didn't register I hadn't written "Rosinante", but it's still shoddy, hah.

Rosinante was confused and scared and he did not know why everything had happened to his family, how his kind and just mother had died such a slow and painful death, how his steadfast and confident father died a miserable man, how his strong and protective brother had been pushed to patricide.

He kept walking - or, tripping mostly. His usual clumsiness added with the tears and shock from his father's murder was not a good combination. In the end, he found himself lying by a tree, waiting for someone to answer his questions and to tell him he deserved to live, rather than just fade away like he was doing now.

"Oh, my!" he heard a woman say, and two pair of feet were approaching him. Soon, he felt a warm embrace as the women talked to each other, then called for help.

"Can you hear me, child?" the first woman asked again, and carefully, Rosinante opened his eyes. He saw the woman now. Her skin was darker than he could recall seeing someone be, and her entire body sans face and hands were covered in black and white clothes. Even her hair was hidden well. The woman looked nothing like her, yet Rosinante could not help but see his mother in the woman's gentle, dark eyes.

Suddenly, with a temporary will to live, the boy cried into the nun's arms.

The nun's name had been Matilda, and he soon found out they had been missionaries, traveling from island to island to spread of word of their god and give goodwill to those that wanted it. When

they had realized how thirsty the islanders were for Rosinante's blood, they had shamed them as best as they could before taking Rosinante with them.

When Rosinante got older, he realized perfectly well why the world hated the World Nobles, and instead found himself wondering why the nuns, knowing his heritage, still took him with them. When asked, Matilda had simply smiled and picked up the Bible to explain her interpretations of God's words, and how she let those guide her actions for a better world.

Growing up in the monastery, Rosinante was drawn to their religion. He found comfort in the words of the priests and Sister Matilda, and found comfort in relying his worries and sins to God. He asked for forgiveness for being born a World Noble, something clearly a sin for the islanders that attacked them. Then he began praying for his mother to have found peace in the afterlife. Over time, he had prayers to his father, as well as prayers to help Rosinante forget the horrors of that day.

Also he OCCASIONALLY prayed for forgiveness over broken ceramics, burned beds and crucifixes somehow turned upside-down during his fits of clumsiness. Occasionally.

When he turned fourteen, the age where the children would normally leave the orphanage and find jobs elsewhere, he was baptized and given a new name, Corazon, meaning "heart".

He stayed in the town where the church resided in, and regularly visited both to help with the orphans still living there, and to converse with God. He would also pray for his brother, which happened more and more over the years. At first he had wished for God to punish him for his sin of patricide, then to forgive his sins afterward. Nowadays, he prayed for God to guide him to repentance, and for him to find peace in this world beyond Mary Geoise like Corazon had.

That was mostly how the years turned. Corazon found peace in the quiet, simple lifestyle - despite the nagging boredom at times - and understood what his father had meant when he had talked about humanity's virtues over the World Nobles. He had hoped his brother had realized that, too, even when wanted posters with his old family name turned up and the bounty only got higher and higher.

As if that was not enough, one day when he had been in the town to help out with some construction, a pirate ship had docked, and naturally it had to be the Donquixote Family.

At first Rosinante had proceeded to carefully leave town; his head was still a mess of emotions when it came to Doflamingo, and he did not want their reunion after over a decade to be ruined by his unbalanced mood.

But of course he had to fall down and get his entire being splashed in water, and of course it caused enough of a ruckus in the town to be noticed; the people might be used to his clumsy shenanigans, but it never stopped being funny. And naturally, when he got up to his feet and searched his surroundings, his eyes locked into Doflamingo's.

"So, twenty-three, huh?" Doffy said with a discomfoting grin, inspecting the humble home he had made in the town. "And you are still single."

It was meant as a joke, Corazon knew that. He still could not find himself even smiling.

"I mean, come on, Rosi, you're twenty-three and still not married? You should be having a litter of brats now."

"You are older than me, should you be speaking?"

"I'm a pirate captain, idiot, I don't have time for children."

'Maybe it is for the best,' Corazon thought, but dared not say it aloud. Though Doffy had intimidated him at times when they were children, the adult Doffy was just unnerving to be around, and the smile he never let fall did not help matters. And considering what his older brother had done to their father, perhaps their bloodline should end with them.

"What are you doing here?" he instead asked. Neither of them had spoken about the day their father died. Or the way Doffy had left Rosi with the promise to return, while the little boy and cried off to some nuns. Maybe they did not know how to begin without shattering this fragile reunion.

"Well, we got some dealings to take care of, and we got this kid with Amber Lead Decease, yeah? We heard there was supposed to be a miracle doctor or something here, so we brought him with us for practice and to see if he could get help."

Corazon had no idea what to say; that it was kind of him to look for a cure to an incurable disease, or ask what in the world a kid was doing with pirates.

As if reading his mind, Doffy answered:

"He is around twelve years old, but he has a talent, Rosi, and the willpower to see that talent used." The empty smile on Doffy's lips widened. "He wants to destroy everything, and kill everyone in his way."

Corazon's mind flashed back to the mobs that had hunted his family for two years, how Doffy had been filled with neverending rage and promises of destruction. Of a destructive force that both saved the family, and that doomed them. He shuddered and looked away. Doffy did not seem to notice.

"If we manage to cure the disease, I was thinking of mentoring him personally, and then make him the second Corazon of my executives." He let out a lighthearted chuckle. "But what a coincidence, huh? That your "new name" or whatever is Corazon? Did you know Vergo was called Corazon too before he left?"

Rosi's hands started to shake at the memory of the executives that had recognized Doffy's powers and taken him away from the family, but he said nothing.

"Perhaps," Doffy continued, this time his tone actually being lower, almost hopeful, "with such a coincidence, you should join us and take the seat until Law is old enough. We could be a family again."

Doffy had been surprisingly supportive of Corazon's gentle rejection. He had explained he felt he owed a debt to the church and that he felt a duty to stay, which was not all lies. Doffy and just nodded, slightly disappointed, and patted his shoulder. He promised that he would try to visit whenever they traveled past this island, now that he knew where his little brother was.

Corazon had almost immediately walked to the church, if only to empty his mind and be able to think about what had happened. Inside, he noticed he was not alone, and that a little preteen boy sat on one of the benches, his face pointed up toward the cross.

"Can I help you?" he asked the boy carefully, and as the boy turned to look at him, Corazon

noticed the subtle white marks forming on his body.

"Young Ma-" the boy started, but then stopped himself and said, "oh wait, nevermind."

The eyes that were somewhat calm, Corazon noticed, still had swirling rage and hatred in them, and without thinking it through, he spoke.

"Are you, perhaps, Law?"

"Yeah, how did you-" Law could not even finish the sentence before Corazon tripped in an attempt to sit down next to the child. "What the hell?"

"Language, child, we're in a holy place," the blonde said when he got back up again, then sat down. "I am, hmm, Corazon, Donquixote Doflamingo's younger brother by blood. I wanted to talk with you."

Two and a half years passed quickly, and Corazon was almost surprised by how regularly the Donquixote Family visited the town. Much to the ire of the townspeople, but they really had no choice in the matter.

Doflamingo treated Corazon like part of the family, despite the latter's formal protests. Eventually he gave in, though. The pirate would tell him about their journeys and the places they had visited, which Corazon found exciting to listen to due to himself not really traveling much in this life. But at the stories got bloodier and darker, and Doflamingo did not seem to understand how telling those details upset his younger brother, Corazon realized there was someone else's visit he looked more forward to: Law's.

At first Law was a rude, angry boy who might as well spit on the cross with the way he acted, but Corazon recognized more than just the rage and need for revenge in his eyes. He also saw a small, scared child - an orphan - who was looking for answers and certainty. It was not like Corazon thought he could give that to the child, but he really disliked the idea of a child as young as him being a part of a pirate crew, and wanted to see if he could dissuade him from staying there.

"Be glad you haven't met Baby 5 and Buffalo, then," Law had one time snapped, "or Dellinger. Oh, god, wouldn't that be a sight. I bet you'd gape and trip and get dunked in holy water at the same time."

But despite Law's vicious comments and disrespect to the church, they still enjoyed debates and talks about the faith. Law, for being a doctor's son and in the company of Devil's Fruit-users all the time, was surprisingly knowledgeable about the church, and Corazon enjoyed giving his few pieces of wisdom to the boy.

Until the day Law's Amber Lead Disease was at its final stage, and he came to say goodbye.

"So they did not find a cure after all?" Corazon asked, disappointed but not entirely surprised. Law just flinched.

"We... might have a last solution," he finally said.

"Oh?"

"It's called the Op-Op Fruit." The blonde man frowned, slightly at the idea of a Devil's Fruit curing the disease, but waited for the boy to continue. "Apparently it is a miraculous Devil's Fruit that can cure any ailments. The Young Master wants to give it to me."

"...Well, as long as there is hope, I don't understand why you insist on saying goodbye. I will never eat any of the fruits myself, but if they can help you live your life and move on from the tragedy of your past, I am only happy. You deserve that, Law."

"I don't know, I just..."

"What? ...Law?"

Law did not say another word after that, and just left.

Just a couple of months later, Corazon fell in shock when he saw a worse-for-wear Law in his home a late, raining night.

"Law! What happened? Where is Doffy?"

"Cora, sir," Law stuttered, his face in shock, "I ate the Op-Op Fruit. I-I have tried to do some... The Young Master made me try it, and..."

"Law, what is wrong?" Corazon asked again, kneeling down so they were closer to the same height.

"I-I think I can be cured. Of the Amber Lead Disease, I mean."

Corazon frowned. There had to be something more to it.

"Law, why are you here without Doffy?"

"...I ran away."

Corazon said nothing. He helped Law sit comfortably on the couch, managed to only burn himself twice while making warm cacao for him, and listened to his story.

By the time Donquixote Doflamingo arrived, the town was basically deserted. He ignored it and went first to Rosinante's home, destroyed the table when said home was empty, and went to the church. He almost ruined the gates when he kicked them open, and saw Rosinante sit and pray quietly.

"Little brother," he said, trying to contain his fury through his smiling, "where is Law?"

Corazon said nothing at first. Silently, he finished his prayers before he rose from the bench.

"Doffy," he began, doing his best to control his emotions, "What have you done?"

The unpleasant smile was as always on Doflamingo's face, but wayward veins slowly bulging out betrayed the man's true feelings.

"You talk as if I was the one who did wrong, Rosi. But are you not the one hiding Law, and is Law not the thief who betrayed my family?"

"Doffy, he is barely a teenager, and you made him experiment on living human beings to test that wretched fruit!" Corazon felt himself become sick as he continued. "You were also going to use him to become immortal."

The older brother just looked at him, as if waiting for an explanation for what he did bad.

"Is it true? Were you really going to force him to perform some ultimate operation on you, to give you eternal life?" Corazon gulped. "At the cost of his own?"

"Force him?" Doflamingo's grin widened. "My dear brother, I would never force anyone to do anything for me, they all do it by their own free will. The moment Law accepted the Op-Op Fruit, he agreed on the terms."

"Immortality, Doffy! Sacrifices!" Their voices were getting louder. "You cannot ask for such things! It goes against any God's-"

""God, God, God, GOD!" Doffy yelled, still grinning but with more veins bulging out. "That is all I ever hear from you, Roci! First you leave me for some whores of God, then you refuse to join me because you have duties to attend to God, and now I need to ask God's permission for my birthright? We WERE gods, Roci! Until that bastard took it away from us and branded us traitors forever!"

A lightning hit not too far from the church, thunder following soon after. It was quiet between the brothers for a while.

"Where is Law, Rosi?"

"I don't know," Corazon said, silently praying he could get through this, "After he told me your plans, I told him to take his boat and go to another Blue, as fast as possible."

It was a lie; when he made the town evacuate, having heard horror stories of Doffy's Birdcage, he had begged the nuns and priest of the church to take Law with them. Law had initially refused, insisting on staying with Corazon, but the blonde man had quickly told him to go while he got rid of the boat he had originally used, as his life, now embraced again, was more important than anything. Thus, he had to preserve it and live his life, while he tried to stall his brother.

It had been a lie and the pirate knew it.

Doffy started laughing quietly, madly to himself, which made Corazon shudder until he spoke. "Come now, Rosi, we are brothers, tell-"

"You are not my brother!" the younger man then yelled, almost surprised by the buried feelings now being dug up. "You are a pirate who killed your own father and left your younger brother in the forest, alone, on an island of people that hated us! All for your own demands of justice! And even after all these years, you still think your "revenge" is more important than the lives of others!"

Corazon pointed at Doflamingo. "You can do whatever you want with yourself and your fanatic followers, Doflamingo, but leave Law and me out of it. Don't you see? He has moved on from the White City, he wants to live! Both of us, we are both free from this dark spiral of revenge you still cling to."

Corazon thought he would have had more to say to his brother, but at the deadly silence between

them in the empty churchhall, looking into the reflecting sunglasses, he realized there was nothing more to say, except a final farewell.

"Goodbye, Donquixote Doflamigo," he then said and turned around to walk out, "I will pray YOU can be free one day, too."

In hindsight, he should never have turned his back on his brother. The man had killed a family member behind his back once, and he could do it again.

The first gunshot was almost immediately followed by another. A third bullet pierced him as he hit the ground, then a fourth one. The shots kept going until all that was heard were clicks of an empty gun, which was soon discarded with a grunt. With no last words, Donquixote Doflamigo turned to leave on the search for a boat with a boy in it.

As Corazon laid on the church floor, he managed to raise his head slightly to look up at the cross above the closing door exit.

'Please, God,' he prayed inside, too hurt to get any words out, 'please don't let him find Law. You were my savior, you can be his, too. Hide him from my brother's evil eyes, guide him to another safe place to grow up, and find him kind people to help him move on. You can be his savior, just like you were mine.'

He tried to imagine it, if only to comfort himself as he vaguely felt his own blood spreading on the floor he laid on. Doflamigo would loot the entire town if necessary, but he would not find Law. The priest and his friends would hide Law well, and when they were sure everything was clear, they would help him on a missionary ship to find a place the Heavenly Demon would never think to look. And hopefully, Law could find peace.

What Corazon never would realize, was that while Law would eventually find peace of mind, and would perhaps even pray to God once in a blue moon (mostly to complain to Him for doing a shoddy job, of course), he would never regard God as his savior. That spot was already taken.

Corazon, formerly Donquixote Rosinante, closed his eyes.

Day 3: Memory

Chapter Summary

When the boy Sengoku picked up woke up, he had no memories of his past.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

"I think I found your brother, Doffy."

Those words were not what Doflamingo had expected to hear Vergo say through the telesnail. He had just recently enrolled into the Marine undercover, after all, and the blonde man had just expected to hear a report of how the last few months had gone.

But to hear someone mention his little brother, after over a goddamn decade, was the last thing he expected. After searching for him upon his return from Mary Geoise, and after killing every peasant on the island, he had assumed his little brother dead. But now...?

"Oh, really?" Doflamingo said in the end, letting some threatening allure seep through. "That is a bold statement, Vergo. Do you have any reason to think you saw my dead baby brother?"

"I took a picture, I will send it to you for you to confirm."

There was a pause as Doflamingo walked over to the printer, and waited for this picture to come out. When it did, the blond man lost his smile.

He knew not to expect the little crying eight-year-old he had left, he knew that it had been years. Still, it was shocking to see a young adult in the picture, with muscles and scars and a height that maybe rivaled his own. To see the blonde messy hair that still almost covered his eyes like they had done as children. To see him in the middle of tripping on nothing, like he did when they were children, and some surrounding men either laughing or trying to stop his fall. To see the Marine uniform on him.

Even if nothing was confirmed, Doflamingo's long-dead brotherly instinct woke up. This was his brother.

"...Doffy?"

"...What is he doing there?"

"I tried to gather a bit information before I called you, but it isn't much. He is apparently an admiral's foster-kid or something, but he did not seem to react to the name Rosinante. He goes by an entirely different name here, too."

Doflamingo was quiet for a while, Vergo not saying a word until a new question or an order was given. Then the captain spoke.

"For now, find out more about him, what happened and what he knows. I will decide what to do with him later."

"Yes."

It took a while for Vergo to report back to him, as Rosinante had apparently grown to be quite careful around strangers asking questions. The spy did eventually find out by adding bits and pieces from both him and others in the Marine.

Rosinante had been found when he was a child by Sengoku the Buddha, and for whatever reasons he had taken him in. Whatever the boy had experienced had not been good, for he had been filled with wounds, blood and was crying when the Marine found him. Rosinante himself could not tell what had happened, because the first thing he could ever remember was waking up in the Marine ship with no memories of what had happened. When the Marine failed to find any parents or matching faces in their Missing-archives, Sengoku gave him a new name and brought him to his home.

And now he was in the Marine, wishing to follow in his foster-father's footsteps.

Doflamingo rested his chin on his hands, letting the information sink in. He was not sure what he was feeling, knowing that his actions against Donquixote Homing might have been what caused Rosinante's amnesia-induced shock. On the other hand, he was not sure if he was angry at how week his brother had been, either, to let grief over that bastard's death have such an effect on him. And after all Doflamingo had done to get them back to the Holy Land, to then hear that his little brother had just walked away and forgotten him felt like an insult.

Vergo had tried to ask Rosinante careful questions when possible, when they had become somewhat friendly with each other. Mostly if he had heard about the Donquixote Family and its captain.

"Of course I've heard about them," he had replied back, but his face seemed to darken. He had not said more after that.

Doflamingo wondered if he might remember something, after all, if the description of his reaction was anything to go by.

"I want to meet him. Bring him to me." Pause. "But make sure your cover is not blown."

"I will do my best, Doffy."

It had not been easy to arrange a "meeting" between the brothers. Vergo was in no position yet to order people to go where he wanted them to go, or decide on who to be stationed where. All he could do was give Doflamingo plans and schedules regarding Rosinante, so the captain could find a way instead.

But on a day Vice-Admiral Tsuru was apparently taking a weekend vacation, Rosinante was going to be in a North Blue operation for four months. The one in charge of the operation was an older fellow, having received the title due to loyalty, good work ethics and popularity with the people. Which meant the ship was a pretty easy target.

It was in many ways good exercise for the recruits in Donquixote Family, as well, to take over a ship and defeat its crew without a too high fatality rate. Which they did a good job with, considering half the people on the ship were still alive and bound when they were done.

Rosinante was among them, in his lieutenant junior grade uniform, though unlike the rest of his crew, he was completely calm as he tried to get out of his shackles. They had placed him separate from the others, so it was easier for Doflamingo to be close and inspect the young man in person.

His smile grew and he chuckled. It got Rosinante's attention, and he stopped struggling to glare at the pirate. His eyes blinked when he saw the infamous Doflamingo before him, and suddenly the marine flinched, as if hit with migraines. Was he remembering?

"I have been waiting to meet you in person," Doflamingo said, which earned him first a confused stare, before Trebol gave his snotty laugh and leaned in from behind Doflamingo. It looked like Rosinante murmured something, but it was ignored.

"Beheheh, hey, hey, Doffy. Is this him?" Without waiting for confirmation, the mucusman went into Rosinante's comfort zone. "Beheh, I can see the resemblance!"

"Too close..." Rosinante had turned his head away from Trebol, his features betraying surprise, disgust and fear he must have contained earlier. Doflamingo kept smiling as he gently but firmly grabbed his brother's chin and forced him to look back his direction. He then turned his head around, to let him get a better view.

"Hmm, you think so, Trebol?" he asks absentmindedly, though he agreed. "Tell me, do you know who I am?"

Rosinante tried to flinch away from Doflamingo's touch. Doflamingo let him.

"Calm."

"Beheheh, it can't be easy staying calm in your situation," Trebol said. Doflamingo raised his eyebrow, feeling a shift in the air, but it was too subtle to really care about when Rosinante finally spoke.

"All we had on this ship were provisions and some basic weaponry," the young man said, and Doflamingo felt himself shiver at the sound of his brother's voice. "Why would the Donquixote Family care about this ship?"

"Why indeed." Doflamingo licked the inside of his lips. "However, you only said who WE are, so I ask again, do you know who I, am?"

The two brothers stared at each other for what felt like an eternity, the sounds of the pirates and the ocean being muted out, until it seemed like the migraines got the better of Rosinante again, and he had to close his eyes.

His grin wider than ever, Doflamingo leaned even closer to his brother, and whispered, "Do you want to know who I am to YOU, Rosi-"

Someone suddenly grabbed Doflamingo's shoulder and dragged him away, and he had been milliseconds away from tearing the enemy apart until he realized the hand belonged to Trebol, who was moving his mouth with no sound coming out. That was when the pirate captain noticed the splinters from the floor he had just kneeled on, and saw that there was a big bullet hole there. Yet no sound had been made anywhere.

Doflamingo turned to look at his surroundings, and saw how his recruits from farthest away lied either dead or wounded, how some of the marine soldiers had somehow gotten free without him noticing, and how an old man was standing tall, a gun in each hand, at the end of the boat.

Just as the blonde pirate realized the bullet must have come from there, the man aimed and shot again, still no sounds as Doflamingo this time avoided them by himself. He was starting to realize that the muting of the surrounding noise had not just been psychological as he had looked at his younger brother, he could literally not hear anything, even as he saw the waves hit the two ships, Trebol screaming bloody murder and himself taking heavy steps on the ship now.

He had long lost his grin, and prepared to send strings to mutilate all the marines.

"Hey, "Doffy"."

The surprise at hearing anything at this point made Doflamingo let go of his strings, and he turned to Rosinante, who had also managed to get free and was standing ever so clumsily on his feet.

"I'm sure he managed to warn the closest marine base for aid, so even if you kill us all, someone will still report you and chase you until Vice-Admiral Tsuru can teach you another lesson. That is if you even manage to stay alive with no means of communication anymore." As if he could see into the future, they saw the lights coming from an approaching ship with the Marine logo on it. "However, if you leave, I will let your people hear your order to retreat, and the ship will be busy helping the survivors. You can even take some of our weaponry just so you have a reason for this senseless visit. Your call."

Realizing that Rosinante must have been the source of the cursed silence, Doflamingo could not help but regain his grin. "Why not? Would hate to force the old lady from her vacation, after all."

And that was how it went. The pirates calmed down when they realized they could hear normally again, and followed Doflamingo back to the ship after grabbing some weapons and food. Few of them would ever question their captain's choices during the raid, and Trebol made sure to discipline and silence those that did. Doflamingo watched as the marine ships turned smaller, his eyes always on his little brother, who seemed like he was standing guard to make sure the pirates kept their promise.

On the way back, when the weather had cleared and they were at a safe distance from any marine ship, Doflamingo thought about the incident, and how his brother had manipulated sound itself to throw the Donquixote Family off guard.

"He's a Devil Fruit user," Doflamingo said, more to himself than the others on the ship. Then his grin widened, and he found himself chuckling before letting out a laugh.

Rosinante had Devil Fruit powers despite his young age and rank, he was strong and determined, and would probably have the potential to unlock some form of haki, as well.

Even with no memories, he truly was Doflamingo's brother by birth.

After that incident, Rosi had apparently been promoted and moved to another base. Rumours from the survivors had spread about the likeness between Doflamingo and Rosi, which might have made things hard for him if he had stayed.

"I think it would have been fine, though," Vergo said over the telesnail as he reported this and his own progress, "there are many in the Marine related to pirates, so even if your ties were confirmed, there is probably not much they could say about it."

Doflamingo remembered how obsessed the World Government had been in their search for Gol D. Roger's lovers and children, and found himself not sure. However, worst case scenario, they would

just take Rosi back to their base next time, maybe bring seastone shackles until he understood the situation he was in. For now, Doflamingo told Vergo to continue with his undercover mission, but keep an ear out if he heard anything worthwhile about Rosi.

Meanwhile, the Family grew both in power and size, as if the mistakes from the incident had never occurred (which, if Trebol had his way, it didn't). Various people applied to become members, many with promise, but there was one person that caught Doflamingo's eye immediately.

Trafalgar Law, a mirror of Doflamingo in his past with a wish to destroy the world, and currently dying.

Law was asocial but diligent in his work, learned what the others taught him with speed and endured all sorts of pain during training. Over the two and a half years he was in the Family, Doflamingo even started to personally mentor him, feeling the boy was more useful than initially thought. With his hatred for the world, he was perfect to mold into his right-hand man and take over the Heart position of the executives. They just had to cure him of that bothersome Amber Lead Disease first.

Some time after Vergo confirmed Rosi had practically disappeared into thin air, they found the location of the Op-Op Fruit, which was the perfect time for them all. If Vergo or another loyal underling ate the fruit, he could probably save Law from his predicament, and give his life to Doflamingo's immortality. All they had to do was make sure Law survived until they acquired the fruit.

It seemed like someone might be aware of a spy's presence in the Navy, for it turned out to be a few more scouts spread over the collection of islands than what Vergo had reported. It was not a problem, really, they easily took care of it, and while the Barrels Pirates and the marines were doing the exchange, Doflamingo easily controlled everyone he saw like marionettes and made them kill each other. The one survivor got a bullet through his head.

With one hand still holding the gun, he carefully picked up the Op-Op Fruit with the other and inspected it. Everyone else were busy looting the area for treasures, though Law had followed the captain in on his orders.

"Look at this, my future Corazon," he said grinning. "This is the fruit that will benefit the both of us."

Of course he should have realized the Marines had another card up their sleeve. That things, despite the minor surprises, had been too easy.

Too calm.

He realized it when he turned and saw Law move his lips with no voice.

He had no idea where the foot had come from, but it hit Doflamingo's wrist and caused him to lose the fruit. As it fell, Doflamingo felt his veins bulge in rage, and without thinking aimed his gun and shot, shot, shot at the figure that had dared to harm him.

When his mind cleared almost immediately afterward, Doflamingo realized what he had done, and watched as his brother Rosi, in the uniform of a commander, barely managed to keep his bullet-filled body standing. In his hands, close to the heart where it had landed, lain the Op-Op Fruit.

Rosi's body fell backward, though no sound came from the impact with the floor.

Doflamingo, almost in a daze, let the gun slide from his fingers and fall on the ground. He walked over to the body, which was having trouble working. He sat down next to his brother, and Law, though clearly confused over the lack of sound and the surprise attack, stood on Rosi's other side and carefully picked the heart-shaped fruit from his chest.

Rosi's eyes briefly wandered over to the little child, before they moved back over to Doflamingo. As they locked eyes, he gently lifted Rosi's upper body up, as if that could help him breathe better. One hand was supporting his head, which had turned to better look at Doflamingo.

"Rosi," the last of the Donquixote traitors mumbled, bringing his brother closer so he was practically resting on his chest, "Why did my cute little brother have to be here?"

While his chest silently kept trying to work and breathe, the young man only looked confused at Doflamingo, as if trying to understand why he was being treated so gently by a pirate. His expression never changing to remembrance, realization or understanding as his eyes closed and his body went still.

"-at happened?" he heard Law suddenly say.

Chapter End Notes

I have to admit I know nothing of military or navy rank or practice, so most of it was just pulled out of my butt or a quick wiki-search.

I like to think that Law, due to his own status as a brother who fell apart when his sister died, woke up and realized what kind of man Doflamingo really was after this incident. He would then find a time to run away, either after the one who consumed the Op-Op Fruit cured him, or he would steal the fruit just to stick it to them, and either he would die or he would cure himself.

Day 4: Abandoned

Chapter Summary

Rosinante had waited for Doflamingo, like he had been told to. And waited, and waited. And in the end he lost faith and left. Next time the brothers reunited, he was the captain of his own pirate ship.

Chapter Notes

I kind of headcanon that an awakened Calm-Calm Fruit does not only affect sound, but also the other senses to various degrees, as well as the ability to sense haki. It can also force weaker opponent to literally calm their minds, letting their guards down.

Also, while I am sure Corazon got the fruit from Sengoku or the Navy, in this story he either found it before the Marines or stole it from them. Whether he was actually thinking of eating it or not, he still tripped and accidentally took a chunk.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

"You abandoned me!" Rosinante had yelled at Doflamingo during one of their more intense clashes. Their pirate ships were busy having their own battle on the seas, and any Executives that might be close by would not know that something was wrong due to the Silent-area the younger brother had created for them.

Doflamingo had to concentrate, but it was hard for him to use Paracite. Not only because this was his brother by birth, but because of that damn Devil Fruit of his. On past clashes, when his underlings had tried to interfere, Rosinante's Calm-Calm Fruit had easily made them lose their guards, making even the Executives easy prey for him and his own crew. He could feel the calming effect trying to break through, and he knew that if he tried to control Rosinante, his concentration would be split just enough for the younger man to infiltrate his defenses.

Right now they were on a standstill, both breathing somewhat heavily from the battle so far. The battle had started when Rosi's Andres Pirates had stolen the Op-Op Fruit Doflamingo so dearly wanted, and he had genuinely felt like he had let his brotherly ties get in the way one last time. He had no idea why Rosinante would even want the Op-Op Fruit; few knew of its ultimate powers, and he already had his own fruit. So unless they had someone new to the crew that would benefit from its abilities, he was lost.

Rosinante's accusation of abandonment had come when Doflamingo had, in his rage, asked what their blood relations meant to him, to always go beyond his limits just to be a hindrance to his brother.

"Blood relations, my ass, Doflamingo," Rosinante continued, wiping blood from his mouth. "Why should I give you any brotherly benefits after you killed our father and abandoned me?"

"I came back for you, Rosi," Doflamingo said back angrily, "but you were not there."

"I waited for you for a year!" Rosinante replied. "I buried Father, hid from anyone that came close to the hut, stayed there even when it was no longer safe, I hunted and picked food, I got caught and beaten so many times because I believed you would be back, but you never came. I stayed until I was forced to just hide in a ship that took me away."

Doflamingo seemed almost like he flinched at that, as if he was momentarily guilty for leaving his little brother alone.

"I went all the way back to Mary Geoise to reclaim our birthright, Rosi," he then said, and all possible guilt was washed away by self-righteousness. "If I had known it would take so long, I would have taken you with me. You know I made the peasants pay for what they did to us when I came back."

Rosinante did not change face, he still glared at Doflamingo, waiting for an opportunity to use his calming powers on him. But Doflamingo would not let him.

"Give me back my Op-Op Fruit, Rosi."

"No."

"Rosi, you have no idea what that Devil Fruit can do; you are just being in my way by taking it due to grudges--"

"Look who is talking about grudges," Rosinante said venomously and rolled his eyes, but then his face softened. "Listen, Doffy, I did not even know you wanted the fruit... However, I can't give it to you."

Doflamingo had raised his eyebrows at his brother's use of his nickname; over the years of their piracy careers, he had only heard him use it when he tried to reach his consciousness.

"Oh?" he asked, a smile creeping up. "And why, my cute little brother, is that?"

Rosi seemed hesitant now, his guard slightly lowered. Could he trust Donquixote Doflamingo enough to tell his reasons? Would it even matter? He knew, deep down, that it was a waste of time, and his battle instincts told him that Doflamingo's invitation to elaborate was a trap. Still, despite years of rivalry and hard feelings, the little brother in him could not help but give in.

"Our newest crewmember," he began carefully, "has an incurable sickness, the Amber Lead Disease. We have tried for a couple of years now to find a cure, to find a doctor or a hospital that could help, but to no avail."

Something seemed to click for Doflamingo. Perhaps he had taken note of the reported attacks the Andres Pirates had performed and connected how they all seemed to start at hospitals.

"The kid has gone through a lot and he is rough around the edges, but he has guts and a will to live. So when he was on his last stage and we heard about the Op-Op Fruit, we figured it was a last resort."

Doflamingo lost his smirk and a vein started bulging on his forehead as he started to realize what would be said next.

"Even if Hell froze over and I for some reason wanted to give you the fruit, Doffy, I couldn't. The child has already eaten it."

In a fit of fury, Doflamingo shot his strings at Rosinante, who quickly jumped away and cut the

strings that got too close.

"If that is so," Doflamingo roared, "Then I guess I will just have to find that breath of yours for myself and have HIM perform the Perennial Youth Operation!"

The older Donquixote brother giggled. "This might be for the best, considering you said he is a child. Don't worry, Rosi, I am good with children! I will make sure he has a good life before he gives it up for me!"

Rosinante had, contrary to Doflamingo's belief, heard about this ultimate power of the Op-Op Fruit. It had even crossed his mind when he found out about it: 'Doffy would surely have loved this kind of opportunity.' It seemed like he had been more right than he wanted to be.

But if this meant that Law was in danger, Rosinante could not risk anything. He had to end this here and now. He had thought that every time he met Doflamingo these last years and he had never been able to do it, but this time he had to. He had to end his big brother's path of evil.

This tantrum of his was actually just what he needed, and Rosinante quickly called out "Serene" and sent a wave of his awakened Calm-Calm Fruit powers Doflamingo's way.

It hit dead on, and with his guard slightly down, the older brother lost his edge as he tried to stay up. It was just for a second, but it was all Rosinante thought he needed. In the air, he took out his gun and aimed; at least give him a quick death.

That was what he had planned, except somehow he had managed to slip in the air, and the gunshot just missed its target.

The slipup was perfect for Doflamingo, who either had come to the same conclusion as Rosinante or was still in his own rage-induced mind. While Rosinante was recovering from his clumsiness, Doflamingo sent a wave of strings into him.

Rosinante screamed in pain as he rolled away, pushed by the force of the attack. Blood streamed out of the new wounds and covered a track from where he had rolled, and when his body laid still, Rosinante painfully coughed out blood.

The younger brother recognized this move, he had seen it before. He remembered once when he and his crew had stumbled upon a village of victims to Doflamingo's strings; some of them had been killed instantly, while others were beyond saving, yet took forever to die, and it was painful.

The attack used on him had been the latter.

Rosinante tried to control his breathing, but it hurt so much. This had never happened before; in all the clashes they had in the past, Doflamingo had always left Rosinante hurt, but not fatally, unable to keep fighting, but never in absolute pain. Then again, Rosinante had really hit a hidden berserk button this time. Still, if he was to die by Doflamingo's hand, he had always thought it would be by a gun, like how he had taken their father.

Despite his other senses being numbed by the sheer pain he was in, he heard the grass move as Doflamingo approached him. The older brother kneeled down.

"I am sorry, little brother," Doflamingo said, his voice gentle as he pushed the hair from Rosinante's eyes. "You do not have to believe me, but I truly do regret I did not reach you in time. That things had to go this far."

That was when Rosinante saw the gun Doflamingo had taken from his coat. He pointed it at his

chest.

"I did not mean to use that technique on you; it is slow, painful, and irreversible. I hate to do this, Rosi, I do, but the least I can do now is to give you a quick death."

The two brothers looked into each others' eyes one final time.

"Maybe," Doflamingo said at last, "if things had been different that time, it would not end like this."

Using his last strength, Rosinante whispered:

"No, Doffy, it still would."

Clumsy Rosinante of the Andres Pirates was shot dead.

Chapter End Notes

Fastest way to give a painless death might be to aim for the head, but Doflamingo is such a tall poop that he didn't want to ruin his cute little brother's face. F+ for Effort, Doffy: A least you tried, I guess.

This was shorter than the last two chapters, but I wanted to catch up to the daily prompts, and I felt the end of this UA would get the gist of what the changes did to the characters, anyway.

The name of Rosinante's pirates is from a character from the Don Quijote novel, where the title character stopped a boy from being beaten by his master, but did not make sure he would be safe when he left, in which the master just kept beating him. My poor attempt to be deep.

Day 5: Magic

Chapter Summary

Doflamingo came back for Rosinante.

Chapter Notes

I forgot to mention it in the other chapter about Pirate!Rosi, but I had read a doujinshi called "God, Please Give me More Time" where the reason for Corazon's makeup was to hide the scars on each side of his mouth, and it starts with Doffy applying it until Law asks to try. In that comic they went along with it, but in this chapter I wanted to make it a point that Doffy uses the makeup as a way to control Rosi.

In canon, Rosi did not have any scars on his face, but I made it here that, at the end of the year Rosi waited for Doffy to return, he received one on each side of his lips, which is why he uses makeup in this story. Also, because Rosi stayed with the Family from very early on, he was never given the Corazon seat, but is instead considered a "hidden card", someone outranking the executives even if he is isolated from doing much action.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

"The world does not want us, Rosi, we can only trust each other."

"I don't believe in magic."

"It is not magic, brat, it is science. Scientists are still researching and learning new things about the devil fruits every day."

"You can't cure my Amber Lead Disease with a stupid magical fruit, sir."

Rosinante looked up from the medical book he was trying to understand to watch Law, who was glaring at him with his own pile of books around. He must still be upset that he was not allowed to join Doflamingo and the others on a journey, instead staying and "tutoring" the Young Master's younger brother in medicine.

"Rosi is diligent, but at this pace, he could use the extra brain," Doflamingo had said, while Rosinante had let his make-up smile for him.

In the present, Rosinante just sighed. "The Op-Op Fruit won't let you just heal with the flick of the hand, Law, one needs to understand the theory behind medicine and the human body. So even if you think the fruits themselves are magical, the way this fruit works doesn't."

"Yeah, yeah," Law mumbled, though on the inside he was thankful that Donquixote Rosinante, the

one and only younger brother of Doflamingo, was so dedicated on curing him of his fatal disease when they found the priced devil fruit. Even if it was futile.

His stomach growled then, and Rosinante let a small smile creep in.

"Go and get something to eat, kid, it is almost dinnertime."

"Aren't you coming with?" Usually dinner time was obligatory for officers and executives, as if to have a real family dinner, but many times Rosinante was just not there. Doflamingo or the executives would say he was busy studying or that he needed to rest after a clumsy fall. Diamante would fall him a fragile little thing at times, but everyone knew that the little brother of their king was strong and deadly in battle, even if the battles he joined had apparently been rapidly reduced lately.

"No, not today."

"You haven't joined dinner for a while now."

Rosinante frowned, trying to find a way to excuse it away, explain or punish the kid for sticking his nose in his superiors' business, but maybe it was the way Rosinante's lips moved, the way it showed the scars on each side of his mouth with the fading makeup, that gave it away.

"Is it because your makeup's ruined? Just put it on again."

"Doffy does it, because my hands are too clumsy. He doesn't like to see the scars, they are from..." Memories flooded Rosinante's eyes for a moment, the loneliness of being alone, the slow way he figured out how to survive, the mobs that still attacked him, their last attempt where they held him down and gave him that 'smug smile you World Nobles have'. He remembered the pain and tears and the want for death, then the blessed relief when his brother had returned. But just like he had trained himself to, the memories were pushed away before they triggered anything further. "They are from a long time ago," he finished.

"Well, the Young Master is on some voyage crap - without me - why do you care?"

Because he had gotten too used to wearing makeup among the Family. Because deep inside, his brother's comments about his ugly scars made him self-conscious about them. Even if the Family itself never commented on his scars without Doflamingo present, he just could not.

"Doffy does not like the scars," he said carefully, "so I avoid showing them off."

"Geez, so the Young Master tells you to wear makeup, tells you you are too clumsy to put it on yourself so he does it, and then he leaves for periods of time even when you can't put it on yourself?"

"You make it sound bad."

"More like stupid." And bad, but a kid like Law could not recognize the implications behind such deliberate dependency.

"Heh, cheeky brat."

It was silent some more, Law rising from his sitting position to leave, before he hesitated.

"...My hands are pretty steady, do you want me to give it a try?"

At first Rosinante wanted to reject him, as the thought of anyone but his brother touching him made him freeze. But he was stuffed in his quarters and wanted to meet people, and he did not want his brother to see his scars when he came back from his travels. So he let Law try.

And upon seeing his face after, he could not stop his laughter.

"Sh-shut up, dumklutz! I have never put on makeup before! Hold on, I'll try again."

Rosinante watched as Law prepared the make-up remover, and when it was ready, the tall man washed his face. The boy tried a couple of more times before he was satisfied, and Rosinante stopped chuckling at the mirror.

"There, I'm sure I'll be able to do that faster next time," Law said, not realizing he implied this would be a common occurrence. "Also, stop always telling me what the Young Master wants or says or thinks. You do it ALL the time. It makes you sound like a tool."

Law was already hurrying to the door before Rosi could react, but as the door closed, he finished:

"It's lame."

Rosinante had the makeup on now, so he was half a mind in following and teach the kid a lesson. But he did not. Instead, he turned to look into the mirror again, carefully touching the makeup.

He thought back to Doflamingo, who always did the makeup elegantly, deliberately and in one try. And he thought about how his brother said he did it because of Rosinante's clumsy hands. Finally, Rosinante started to wonder: Why had he never just done as Law, to just keep trying until he got it right?

"Oh, the makeup managed to stay on while I was gone? I'm impressed, Rosi, I thought you would be clumsy and have it fall off again."

"No, Law helped me."

A small vein seemed to appear on Doflamingo's forehead, but it quickly calmed down as the older brother kept smiling.

"Well, I guess I should be thankful, at least I could be greeted by my cute little brother without any ugly scars."

Rosi flinched a little at the comment, but Doflamingo ignored it as he closed the distance between them, and with his long fingers inspected the makeup.

"Hmm," he said, his critical done almost deliberate, "not good enough, I'll fix it."

"He can practice."

"It is easier if only I do it."

"You don't have to."

Rosinante had not meant much by his retort, but it nonetheless created a tense silence in the room as the two brothers looked at each other. Doflamingo was the one who turned and started looking for the makeup eraser.

"You are my younger brother, Rosi," he said, stern as if he was talking to a child. "It is important that you look the best at all times. As your older brother, if I say I should be the one to hide your ugly scars from the world, you do as I say."

The pirate captain turned to look at Rosinante, his brow arched and with a smile that said he knew exactly what he was doing. "Or are you going to disobey me?"

Something turned in Rosinante's stomach at the question, and though he controlled his face not to show the effect it had on him, he was still as a statue when Doflamingo erased Law's makeup and replaced it with his own.

"How is that NOT magic?" Law asked once more as they were reading through notes and chapters regarding the Op-Op Fruit. "You can teleport, what does that have to do with surgeries?"

"To replace organs, I reckon," Rosinante said, but their conversation did not have the same annoyance anymore. After more than one year of studying together on medicine, their relationship had softened considerably, and Law, despite his hatred for the world still crystal clear, did not mind as much that he was stuck tutoring an adult over joining on voyages and raids anymore.

Then, he read the next page of the previous Op-Op user's notes, and froze. Rosinante noticed.

"What is it, kid?"

"It says here that the ultimate ability for the Op-Op Fruit is that it can make someone immortal," he mumbled. "It's called the Perennial Youth Operation."

"...Ah, yes." It was silent for a few seconds before Rosinante tried to clear the air, "It is still not magic."

"You knew?" Law glared back at the captain's younger brother, as if accusing him.

"Well, Doffy wants the fruit for a reason, after all."

"But... you're his brother."

"Which is why he trusts me to use the fruit right, even if YOU are still a better doctor."

"...Why?"

"Because he is my older brother, Law." Rosinante sighed and looked out at the window, his mind away as if he was simply reciting a mantra. "Because I owe him for everything he has done to me."

"I wanted to leave many times."

"I know. You were good to wait."

"Sometimes new people came to the hut, they seemed kind. I wanted to go to them, but I hid."

"They wouldn't have been nice, Rosi, the world hates those with fragile minds like you."

"After a year passed, I was angry and thought about leaving."

"But you didn't. Why is that?"

"Because you said you would be back. Because you are my brother. Because I have no one without you."

"That's right. And I promised you I would reward you for your loyalty. You would never be alone again, in the Family you are accepted and loved, not like the rest of the world that hates us."

"You know," Law said one day, when they were alone on DoFlamingo's ship on the voyage to Minion Island, "everyone speaks about how great your stupid loyalty or whatever was, for waiting a whole year for your brother, and how DoFlamingo is doing his obligated duty as the older sibling to treat you like he does. And you said that is why you have to eat the devil fruit, to repay him. But is what he did really that great? Is doing an obligation anything to celebrate? I did so many things for my sister because I loved her and wanted her to live, not because I had to. I don't want praise for that, I was just being a big brother, and now she's dead. But if someone is doing the bare minimum and barely even that, why are you acting like he is the greatest and you owe him?"

"Because he came back for me, Law."

"It's not great and amazing that he came back for you, it is stupid that he left you in the first place."

"...He is my brother."

"...It seems like you are only following your obligations as a little brother, too, if that is your excuse to everything."

Memories of the year he was alone flowed back, though triggered by Law they did not feel so bad anymore. A year of staying alone, of burying his headless father's corpse, of surviving against the peasants' attacks, of looking for food alone and failing due to his clumsiness. Of the many times he was just so lonely he cried and cried. Then how it ended when his brother returned, took one look at his brother's lengthened lips, and ordered his Executives to slaughter everyone on the island.

But the fear of being alone again never really disappeared, and even now, twenty-six years old, he shivered at the possibility of disobeying his brother and being left alone.

With a voice so low the teen next to him could not hear, he whispered,

"Maybe I am just afraid of being alone again."

"Am I a tool to you, Doffy?"

"Who said that? Who would dare to lie to you, and try to shake our trust in each other?"

"Then why do you want me to kill myself?"

"...What are you talking about?"

"The Perennial Youth Operation. We both know it will kill me when I perform it on you. You keep me away from the crew, don't take me on voyages and shelter me like I am a Wano maiden, and all that will go to waste."

"I am not sheltering you, Rosi, I am protecting you like I promised I would. I promised you would

never be in danger again, so I do not want you to join for battle. I promised you would never be alone again, so I make sure you are surrounded by the Family even if you hide in our chambers.

"I promised we would always be together, and that is why I want you to do the operation. When you perform the Perennial Youth Operation, your life becomes mine. We will always be together, just like I said."

"Is that so."

"Do you not believe me, little brother?"

"...I do, Doffy."

"Good, then don't mention this ever again."

He never denied Rosinante being a tool, though.

There had been a time he disobeyed his brother, Rosinante remembered as he took a break from the celebrations on the ship. They had successfully massacred the Barrels Pirates and taken the Op-Op Fruit, and though the "ceremony" of Rosinante taking a bite had been less than elegant because of a clumsy fall, the atmosphere had been good. Now all that mattered was to learn to use the powers and learn how to perform the Perennial Youth Operation.

When Rosinante was nine years old and his brother had returned, it had taken a while before he dared to speak again, having not spoken a word during his 12 months of solitude, and his new wounds, stitched together by Doflamingo's strings, still hurt. But when he could speak comfortable again, he always spoke against Doflamingo and his Executives' actions, against the slaughter, the robbing, everything they were doing.

The Executives had not liked that, Rosinante remembered, and had questioned his loyalty to his brother. Since the child had associated loyalty as being rewarded with his brother's return and an end to his loneliness, the little Rosinante would always freeze and take back what he said, in fear of being left behind. At first his brother would calm him down and say it was okay, that as his last-living blood relative he was allowed to speak his mind.

But over the years, that had changed, slowly. First he stopped correcting the Executives' claim of disloyalty, then he stopped saying Rosinante could speak his mind without Doflamingo getting mad. It came full circle when Doflamingo, at eighteen and covered in blood from participating in the slaughter of marines, asked Rosinante if he was disobeying him, or if he wanted to leave if he was not happy with what his older brother did for them.

That must have been the moment, Rosinante decided in the present. That must have been the moment he stopped voicing his concerns and protests, and began suppressing them instead, preferring to feel numb and empty over the crimes and atrocities the Donquixote Family committed than risk looking like he disagreed with his brother. Now, he tried to remember the raids he had been allowed to join, or the atrocities he had watched. And he realized he remembered nothing. It was all a big blank.

"I want to join you on your next voyage," he therefore said to Doflamingo, hopefully with a tone that did not sound like it would give in.

"Why?" Doflamingo asked, his eyebrow perched. "It might be dangerous, Rosi, and you'll just fall overboard because you're so clumsy."

"I won't."

"You're a devil fruit user now, a very important one. I don't want to risk your life in a possible battle anymore."

"Then I will stay at a safe distance, I will even be on the boat the entire time. Please, brother, I just need to get out of here for a while. Before I perform the operation."

Doflamingo looked over at his brother. The mention of the Perennial Youth Operation had him pay more attention.

"Fine, you can join. I wouldn't want my cute little brother to feel caged, after all."

Rosinante flinched slightly at the way he was referred to, but quickly hid it with a nod and a smile.

"Thank you, Doffy."

"Hey, we're the last blood relatives we've got, we gotta stick together." Doflamingo grinned over to Rosinante, already knowing the answer. "Right?"

"Right."

It was a bloodbath, Rosinante thought when he watched the Family. The village had hosted a rival who had run away from a deal, and the Family spared nobody. Rosinante felt sick watching his brother use his strings to cut down those in his way, his grin manical and entertained.

Rosinante removed his sunglasses, inspecting them and the expensive design. Doflamingo had claimed he took great care to choose the perfect pair for his little brother, a long time ago, to make sure they would fit him perfectly and do their job.

How had he been so blind? How had he managed to ignore what monster his brother had become? Was it truly because Doflamingo had sheltered him, kept him away from the bloodbaths and the atrocities so he would not feel this way? Or was it Rosinante, who had let fear take over him and make him numb his emotions, anything, so that he would not be alone again?

The sunglasses broke at the pressure of his hands.

"Rosinante, stay awake!"

The older man coughed blood as they were on their small boat, which was slowly managing to escape from Doflamingo's ship due to the confusion from the surprise Marine ship. Which had not been a surprise, really, considering it was Rosinante who had tipped them off where they would be next. He knew he would not get far by simply escaping, he needed a head start, and a big one.

He had not been thinking, when he took Law away and to the boat. But when Doflamingo had for whatever reason said Law might be more trouble than worth, Rosinante had bolted for the boy's room as soon as possible and taken him to the emergency boat. His body was shaking at the thought of leaving his brother, of betraying him, but he tried to avoid it; all he wanted to focus on was that law was all right. Later he would return to his brother, apologize and beg for forgiveness and perform the Perennial Youth Operation. But first he needed to make sure Law was safe.

That had been one thing, but when a gunshot had been heard and barely avoided Law, Rosinante looked up to see the tall figure of his brother in the distance, shooting at the boat. And though the figure was far away, Rosinante had known he was aiming at Law. And Rosinante's body had moved.

After the initial shot, several others followed immediately, filling the younger donquixote brother's back with bullets before another marine canon was shot, and the Family were distracted.

"Rosinante, please, do that magic thing, just make the bullets disappear and it'll be good, right?"

The younger Donquixote brother could not stop his pained chuckle.

"I told you it isn't magic," he said, then with great effort raised himself up again. "I... I'll show you something else, instead."

And with that, Rosinante created rooms to teleport the boat away. It only worked some meters at a time, the rooms not being that big considering the state of the user, but Rosinante was determined to get them as far away as possible with the little energy he had left.

"Rosinante, it's enough!" Law cried, hitting the man's legs in a futile attempt to have him sit. "We're far enough already, just lay down and use the powers to heal yourself, please!"

But Rosinante did not listen. He knew he was tapping into his own lifeline, but his life was all but forfeit anyway. His biggest concern now was to give Law a head start. So he kept going.

Eventually, he had passed out, his body not able to keep using the devil fruit powers while also staying alive with multiple bullet wounds. When Rosinante came to, the boat had hit land, and Law was crying.

"Doffy?" he asked carefully. Law sniffed.

"Hours since we ran from them," he said, "I don't know where we are, but, but... Rosinante, sir... your wounds..."

"It's all right, Law," Rosinante said carefully, though it was barely a whisper. "Listen, Law. When I die, the Op-Op Fruit will regenerate onto a fruit not too far from me. I am so sorry, but I need you to find it. Keep it far away from Doffy, please. Nobody should have what the fruit can give, least of all him."

"I'm, I'm sorry."

"What are you apologizing for?" Rosinante said, hoping he could get across some humour in his whisper. "You're not to blame. Doffy is my brother, he was my responsibility, and I let him become the way he is now. It is my fault, and you have to pay for it."

"I'll do it," Law said through his tears, his teeth grinding together, "I'll find the fruit, and I will stop Doflamigo."

Rosinante smiled, his eyebrows arched upward as if to silently apologize.

"Thank you for staying with me. I'm sorry that you have to watch this, Law, but..." He closed his eyes. "I am relieved I am not alone."

And with a peaceful smile, Donquixote Rosinante died.

I think I would have liked to end this differently, but I wanted to keep with the theme that Doflamingo shot Rosinante, and that in all the ways in these chapters, he never shot him dead with cold, calm intention. In the first chapter it had been an accident caused by children fighting. In the second chapter it was caused by blinding rage triggered by the words "free", like in canon. In the third chapter it was done without Doflamingo knowing it was Rosinante, and in the fourth he WAS calm, yes, but he didn't WANT to kill Rosinante, he just did it because he would die anyway and he wanted to have him die semi-painlessly, at least. So in this chapter I wanted him to aim for someone else and have Rosinante block the bullets instead. If I was making a proper fanfic where I did not try to keep to my own theme restrictions, I think a lot of things would have been and ended differently. But honestly, at this point I just wanted to finish up the prompt and, hopefully, move on to the two last prompts. In which the Teenage one will be troublesome because it doesn't work at all with what I want to do with the alteration, but... I'll try. I think my "five AUs where the thing happens and once it doesn't" theme could have been better at another time than during a week with prompts like these. ^^;

The first version of this story had Rosinante be totally devoted to Doflamingo, and only reason he died was because he wanted to protect Law, who had to escape due to Doflamingo viewing him as a threat to Rosinante's dependency on him (which he feared would stop him from performing the youth operation). Rosi would then tell Law to find the regenerated Op-Op Fruit and give it back to Doflamingo, thinking his brother would then forgive Law. He would think it was all his own fault, blaming his clumsiness and weakness and being a bad little brother, and then die. I initially wanted it to be that Rosinante either was brainwashed by Doflamingo to follow him, or was genuinely on his side at least.

But in the end, I changed it to make him realize that Doflamingo is probably the last person who should be eternally young, and fought years of indoctrinated inferiority and dependency to both save Law and to take the power away from Doflamingo. As my real life lead to a lot of traveling, Corazon Week ended and I could not finish this chapter properly, but I at least wanted to end it even if it is not the best way to tell this particular alteration.

Day 6: Teenager

Chapter Summary

Doflamingo does not shoot Corazon on Minion Island.

Chapter Notes

EDIT: The italics disappeared and some double-spaces are gone, I went and fixed it.

I wanted to avoid Japanese names and honorifics, but that became a bit difficult since Corazon's Cora-san being translated to Mr. Cora just didn't sit right, and I found no official translations that did anything else. In the end, I went for the kids calling him "Cora, sir" when talking to him, as that is at least slightly similar to "Cora-san" and gives a bit of respect to his nickname.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

When Law was at the beginning of his teenage years, he lost Corazon.

"Look at this extra work you've given me," Doflamingo spat, casually looking for his gun in his feather jacket. Or, he looked like he was acting casual for those that did not know him, but anyone who had spent a reasonable amount of time with the Donquixote knew that the veins on his forehead indicated anything but casual.

Finding the gun, he took it out and pointed it at Rosinante. "Why do you get in my way, Corazon?" Louder, "Why do you force me to kill my own family by blood, all over again?"

Rosinante merely glared back, his gunhand shaking from fatigue. But seeing the way his little brother's eyes glinted of doubt, Doflamingo twitched at the familiarity. Then he scoffed.

"You won't shoot me," he realized aloud, his own gun slightly lowered, but still on the ready. "You... are a lot like Father."

The mention of Homing had Rosinante flinch, his breath heavy and pained.

Behind him, Law was anxiously waiting in the chest, silently muttering to himself, *"He's after me, he'll be angry but he won't kill him. He's after me, he'll be angry but he won't kill him."* His whole body was shaking, worried for Rosinante. The latter could practically feel it outside the chest, but ignored it as he forced himself up to his feet. Even if a small, desperate hope in him still thought Doflamingo would not pull the trigger (because he was their father's son, too), he did not want to risk any bullet potentially reaching Law.

His hand shook still, but as the brothers glared at each other, Rosinante took a sudden deep inhaled and tried to force his finger to pull the trigger.

The Family tensed, but Doflamingo, calm as ever, raised a hand to stop them from firing their

weapons.

And in the end, he had no reason to worry. Rosinante let out the air, and his hand fell down. Doflamingo's lips arched ever so slightly, and parted his lips to insult his brother on his pathetic weakness. But before he could let anything out, Rosinante spoke.

"Law won't follow you, Doffy," he said, almost softly, his eyes still on his brother, but his glare was gone. "He isn't what he used to be, he beat his own fate and will live to be a teenager. He is no longer walking the path you do."

His gun slipped from his fingers, and the eyes lowered, instead looking at the snow. His eyes were distant.

"I wish," he continued, "I had stayed, or followed you to Marie Geoise, fourteen years ago. If I had, maybe things would have been different, maybe I could have stopped you from becoming this monster you are. Maybe, when we were still brothers, I might have had a chance."

Their eyes locked again, but Rosinante's were just full of sorrow and regret.

"I guess I am sorry about that, in a way," he said at last, and something about his voice just screamed defeat, acceptance. "I'm sorry for being such a terrible brother."

"Doflamingo, Rosinante... I'm sorry for being such a terrible father-"

Doflamingo laughed then, loud and sudden and it made the officers and executives jump in surprise. Rosinante widened his eyes, having anticipated his brother's gun to shoot, not to be lowered while its holder laughed. He could feel Law, too, sitting completely still.

Then he walked forward, and grabbed Rosinante by his bloody shirt.

"If you are so sorry," Doflamingo said, his voice seething with madness and rage, "Then repent, Rosinante, so I am not forced to kill you, you bastard."

"Young Master!" an officer yelled, running toward them from the ship's direction. Doflamingo let go of Rosinante's shirt when he turned around, and the returning weight was too much for his weakened body, so it collapsed in the snow. "Vice-Admiral Tsuru's here, we have to leave, now!"

The mad grin was lost, and the Donquixote captain scoffed. Then he kneeled, picked Rosinante's hair and dragged him up, the action causing the younger brother to weakly hiss and shut his eyes in pain.

"Looks like our little talk took too long," Doflamingo said, "But don't worry, this will continue. You are not allowed to die yet, my cute little brother. First I will make you pay me back for your betrayal, then I will have you beg for death before I grant it."

And with that, the Family turned to run, Doflamingo ordering them to leave the treasure behind as it would only slow them down. Rosinante was dragged with them, and with his last bout of consciousness, he watched as the chest opened slightly, revealing a teary-eyed Law watching the figures leave. By the way he left the chest and seemed to take some steps in their direction, he might be trying to follow them, maybe try to somehow save his Corazon. But fortunately, their eyes met, and Law froze.

No, Law, Rosinante thought, hoping his eyes could convey his feelings. You can leave now. Leave this place, leave this life, and never look back.

His face distorted in muted cries, Law turned around and ran the opposite direction. With the cannonfires and the distance so far, the Family might not be able to hear his cries, but Rosinante forced himself to stay awake, to keep the Calm spell up for as long as possible.

Nothing will hold you back anymore. Live through your teenage years and enjoy life, and forget this nightmare.

It was only when they were on the ship and Rosinante was thrown into the brig, feeling the ship move, that he sighed in relief and closed his eyes.

And on Minion Island, a child's cries could be heart.

When Law was at the end of his teenage years, he finally heard more reports about the Donquixote Family's Executives. But there was little news.

Trebol, Diamante and Pica were the same people as before, leading armies and following Doflamingo's orders. But whenever the question of the Corazon executive came up, people mostly shrugged. The rumours were mixed.

"I heard the Corazon executive stays as the ultimate defense for the Dressrosa castle."

"Corazon died years ago, and apparently he and Doflamingo were so close the guy refuses to have someone take over the title."

"Meh, I remember they said Corazon betrayed the Donquixote Family and was tortured and executed years ago."

"Rumour has it Corazon left the Family and they have yet to find him, dunno why they didn't just give the title to someone else, maybe there's a ritual where he has to be present?"

Law, who was already fairly up-and-coming in his piracy career, thought about the rumours he had gathered over time, tried to deconstruct and put the parts together to make sense of anything. But in the end, the results were always the same; the most likely outcome of that day on Minion Island was Cora tortured and killed. And as Doflamingo's power increased, and he had to see that face so similar yet so different from Cora on the newspapers, Law's blood boiled.

When Law was twenty-six and captured by Doflamingo, he met Cora again.

He had woken up on the floor in the halls of the Executives, his arms and feet bound by seastone shackles, and in the presence of the former King of Dressrosa, Riku. At being taunted by the other Executives on their chairs, he had noticed pretty quickly that the Heart seat was occupied.

Corazon was sitting there, staring blankly ahead. And the world stopped for Law.

"Cora, sir?" he asked carefully, almost a whisper. Doflamingo was smiling, a vein appearing.

"Ah, that's right, you two knew each other before, fufufu," he said, as if that fact was an afterthought, as if their "acquaintance" had not been what had taken the Op-Op Fruit from his hands thirteen years ago.

"But... he died, that day."

"Fufufu, that was the original plan, but in the end, I decided he had to pay back for all the trouble he caused me," Doflamingo said, and he walked over to the Heart seat, leaning against it with a hand pointing to the man sitting there as if showcasing him. "Caesar had some research from Doctor Vegapunk's labs regarding the human mind, and we had the perfect rat for him to experiment on."

Law felt sick, but he forced the bile in his throat down, and managed to at least sit on his knees to get a better look at his savior.

"Cora, sir," he tried, searching in the eyes that did not react. "Cora, sir, it's me, Law."

Nothing.

"Fufufu, he doesn't hear you, my boy," Doflamingo said darkly. "His heart has been permanently emptied, he is practically a human pacifista, and listens only to my orders. Watch."

He leaned down to Corazon's ear, and in a voice that was sort of a whisper, but too loud to be one, said, "Corazon." The younger brother blinked, but no emotion was betrayed, "kick Law."

Carefully and deliberately, Corazon rose from his seat, walked over to Law, and fell.

"Too bad even pacifistation wouldn't get rid of that idiotic clumsiness," Doflamingo said, grinning while the others snickered. Corazon got back on his feet and continued.

It felt like Law was a young teenager again, desperately searching for recognition from his savior, before he felt a kick onto his stomach had pushed him backwards. He gasped for air while the Executives laughed. Corazon quietly turned and walked back to the seat.

"Amazing, isn't it?" Doflamingo said, grinning. "Makes me almost relieved I didn't pull the trigger that day. His devil fruit - ah, he had eaten devil fruit already, did you know? - it is pretty useless, but it can come in handy at times. And thanks to Ceasar's experimentation, he is nothing but an obedient servant. Just like how my cute little brother should have been in the first place."

"I hate it when he calls me that," Cora had slurred after one too many bottles of rum, at the end of another unsuccessful cure hunt, and Law had taken the opportunity to ask some questions about his brotherhood with the Donquixote captain. "First of, I'm not cute, I'm like a cool, lone wolf." Law had snickered at that.

"Second, it makes me feel..." Cora's eyes, already sort of absent due to the alcohol in his blood, grew more distant, "it makes me feel like I'm a kid again. Small, weak, useless. Helpless to do anything." He sighed.

"And sometimes I wonder if that's why he does it."

"You sick bastard," Law spat, glaring at Doflamingo. "How could you do this to your brother!"

"Fufu, I could ask the same about him," Doflamingo said, nodding to the now docile Corazon. "Why did he betray his big brother? It was only right that I made him correct his mistakes and atone, at least until the Op-Op Fruit was back in my grasp again."

He moved then forward, and kneeled so he was slightly closer to Law's level.

"And then I figured that, considering your history, he might be a good exchange between the two of us, Law. How about it? My useless brother has kept his position as the Heart Executive, but now that you are here, I won't mind ending Corazon's misery and let you take his place."

Law looked at the man who had saved him thirteen years ago. He remembered another night when the two of them had talked about Cora's contempt of pirates and his reply when Law said the people in Donquixote Family were pretty free.

"There are different ways to practice freedom, Law, and even more ways of creating illusions of it. My brother does that, he makes his underlings think they have a choice in his Family, when all they do is a result of their emotional debt to him, or the binds of fear. Death is preferable to losing your real freedom."

But by then, Sugar had passed out and someone by the name of Kyros cut Doflamingo's head.

After the battle, and after Law had been treated, he returned to Corazon.

As it had turned out, the Calm-Calm Fruit was not as useless as he had told Cora when he was a teenager. Fighting without the second most dependable sense was definitely a drawback, and had it not been for Strawhat's observation haki, they might even have lost.

But the worst had definitely been the simple fact that Law had to go against his savior in the first place, something Doflamingo had been downright gleeful about. No matter what he and Luffy sent Cora's way, he just kept coming back up. That was, Law himself had been unable to do much against Corazon, and Luffy had done most of the fighting. At some point Luffy must have broken his leg, but all that resulted in was a painful-looking limb that still showed no reaction on the man's face.

Law wondered just what had been done to Corazon to make him like that. He fought a shudder at the imagination.

In the end they had managed to manipulate seastone shackles on the man, which finally made him unable to move much. But now in the present, when Law was able to stand on his own again, he had asked around for where they had taken Corazon. Someone had taken him to a prison for the Doflamingo Family members still alive, and here Law was, standing on the other side of the bars that contained his savior.

Corazon himself seemed to have been dead where he laid with his back against the stone ball, his foot still broken, and perhaps his arm as well. And the little Law could see of his eyes, they were as dead as the first time he had seen him.

"Cora, sir?" Law asked cautiously, and his heart dropped when Corazon raised his head, but the way he looked at Law was still not recognition; it was the same dead eyes, but now with purpose as he painfully, clumsily got up on his feet and limbed over to the bars. Doflamingo's orders must still be active.

"Corazon, kill Trafalgar D. Water Law."

There was not much for the man to do, as his arms were still bound by seastone and his entire body was shaking, and the bars, also made of seastone, made Law quite safe. At least physically.

"Cora, sir," Law repeated, his voice betraying sorrow and regret. "I am... so sorry. I should have saved you a long time ago, this is all my fault."

He knew the old Cora would disagree. Law also knew that there was no way he could have done anything if he had come any earlier. And he knew that this is what Cora had wanted, what he had expected to happen. Well, maybe not to be kept alive and practically lobotomized and made into a

human pacifista, but Law knew, with the wisdom of hindsight, that Cora had never expected to escape Minion Island whole.

"Cora, sir, if you can still hear me, somewhere in there... Thank you." Law's hands shook. "I think... if it had not been for you viciously and stubbornly trying to find me a cure, I would never have survived my thirteenth birthday. If you had not sacrificed your life, your freedom, yourself, I would not have lived through my teenage years. I... I am a pirate, I know you never cared much for piracy, but... I like to think you would be OK with my choices."

There was still nothing in Corazon's eyes, but the body kept touching the seastone bars and falling down, his body shaking as he tried to fulfill a monster's orders. After having Sanji beat Ceasar half to death over the telesnail, Law had demanded Ceasar to tell him how to release Cora, but the answer had been what he feared the most.

"It's impossible," Ceasar had whined over the snail, "you can't release the man's mind, the whole point of the experimentation was to delete it, remove it from the heart. The only thing he can do is look pretty and follow Doflamingo's orders, and that's only as long as it doesn't require emotions."

The snail had been silent for some seconds, the realization creeping up on Law.

"The only way to "release" him in any form at this point is to let the body die."

"Death is preferable to losing your real freedom."

Law dragged out a gun from his jacket. It was the same marine-issued gun Cora had pulled out on Minion Island, the one he had let go off, and which had subsequently been forgotten by the pirates.

At twenty-six years old, the same age he had last seen Cora truly alive, Law shot Corazon dead.

Somewhere hidden beneath the bruises, dried blood and ruined makeup, Law could have sworn he saw the ghost of a smile.

Chapter End Notes

Worst way to incorporate "Teenage" prompt ever.

Since I am already late with the prompt and I think Corazon staying alive and being on Doflamingo's side during the present is interesting enough that someone should make a more elaborate fanfic out of it (hopefully), I decided to skip most of the battle scenes and all the changes that would happen, and instead go straight to the end of the arc. No matter the changes I'd have made, it would still end up with Luffy and company winning.

Day 7: Hope

Chapter Notes

Last chapter, and I will never do a prompt week again. Or maybe for a while. It was very fun, just had to be pushed aside a good while for my private life.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

"So you are saying I will die?"

"Yes."

"No way around it?"

"Not that I can see, to be honest; you've been doomed for years, kid, sorry to tell ya."

Corazon raises his eyebrows, but his eyes convey casual thought rather than surprise or worry. He looks away from the soothsayer down at his crossed knees, thinking about what she claims she has seen. Then he looks for coins in his pocket, picks them up from the ground when he loses them between his fingers, and offers them to the old woman.

"Well," he says, carefully, "Thanks, anyway."

The hag's left eyebrow arches, her eyes going back and forth between the gold and his eyes.

"Most people get more upset when I tell them they'll die," she admits curiously, but nonetheless accepts his money. Corazon shrugs.

"I've had a good life."

"No, you haven't."

The sharp reply makes Corazon laugh, despite the situation, and he quickly hides his smile behind his hand to gather himself back.

"More good years than bad, then," he suggests, but adds cautiously, "though the bad ones were pretty... bad."

"Hah," the woman laughs and slaps her knee gently, as if he has said the funniest thing. "Seems like it, from what I saw, too. Pretty bleak stuff, though most of it hazy. But it says something when a sweet boy like you gets shot in every future I check."

Corazon smiles in an attempt to be polite, but he knows it conveys too much sorrow.

"I had a suspicion it would end like this for a while now," he admits. Then, with a sigh, he raises himself from the chair. "Well, thank you, Ma'am; I'm not quite sure I believe your craft, but I got some out of it, I guess."

"Meh, thanks for not blowing up over dying young," is all the woman says, as if the idea of an early death is a trivial matter not worth the angst, and finds her purse to place her new-earned

money. Corazon pushes the carpet door to the side to exit the tent, but as he looks up, he sees Law. The boy is hiding his snow-pale skin in a cape, asking around for provisions on their voyage, oblivious to where Corazon has been.

"Hey, Ma'am?"

"Yes?" she says back, and when he throws an extra gold coin her way, she expertly takes it. He briefly wonders if she had seen that happen in her visions as well, but pushes it aside. He moves to give her a view of Law.

"The boy," he says, "Will he live?"

"Hmm," the old woman says, squinting and touching the orb before her. She quickly closes her eyes and mumbles something, then opens them again to look at Corazon.

"Difficult to say how far," she says, "But concerning your death, he will most definitely survive." She shrugs. "I'd even bet money that he will grow to be older than you are, but I won't say more with just one coin."

She gives a coy wink to Corazon, but he simply smiles politely and bows, falls on his face, and leaves.

It is true what he said that he has been expecting death by gunshot; that is a regular fate of active marines, and considering Corazon's undercover mission, it has always been a possibility. So even if Corazon does not quite put his faith in soothsayers and fortune tellers, especially when what they predict is neither soothing nor fortunate, it still hits him hard.

But at the same time, he cannot help but smile when Law turns around, sees him, and walks over.

"You better not have wasted any money, Cora, sir," he grumbles, "It'll be a long journey to Swallow Island."

Corazon smiles and pets Law's head, which earns him protests and curses. But he cannot help it, after the phone call from Doflamingo, despite the unspoken threats and suspicions behind it, there is finally something to look forward to.

Despite having just heard he will most likely not survive the journey, Corazon is fine with it. Because he has hope. A strong hope that it will be worth it, and that Law will walk out of the island cured and filled with life.

He just has to keep that hope.

Corazon is shot dead in the end.

But it doesn't matter.

His hope survived.

I like to pretend, when the soothsayer said Corazon got shot in every future she saw, she meant that literally; there are an infinite possibilities and futures, and she only looked at a few because it is impossible to look at them all, but on those she looked (and she is skilled enough to know how many to search to get a general idea of the possible future in her own timeline), he got shot. Probably many where he dies peacefully... I say.

Thank you for following these weird, clumsy AUs with me.

Please [drop by the archive and comment](#) to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!